Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Eighteenth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1348

Introduced by Representatives Lord Allan Jay Q. Velasco, Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez and Joseph Stephen “Caraps” S. Paduano

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SEVERE AND UNPRECEDENTED FLOODING IN THE PROVINCES OF CAGAYAN AND ISABELA DURING THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYPHOON ULYSSES

WHEREAS, beginning on November 11, 2020, various areas of the Philippines were severely affected by Typhoon Ulysses (international name: Typhoon Vamco), the 21st typhoon to hit the country this year;

WHEREAS, to date, the death toll from Typhoon Ulysses has reached sixty-seven, with over twenty people missing, and the damage to agriculture and infrastructure estimated to be at least at 1 billion pesos and half a billion pesos, respectively;

WHEREAS, Typhoon Ulysses was predicted to make landfall in Luzon, and came in the heels of recent typhoons and heavy monsoon rains that battered the country;

WHEREAS, given the circumstances and the predicted Category-4 strength of Typhoon Ulysses, the forecast should have prompted concerned government agencies and local government units to take necessary preemptive action to mitigate possible adverse effects on local communities;

WHEREAS, as Typhoon Ulysses made the expected landfall, heavy winds and torrential rains battered parts of NCR, Bicol Region, Central Luzon, CAR, and CALABARZON, causing power failures, extreme flooding, and heavy damage to infrastructure and property, and threatened the lives and livelihood of many of our countrymen;

WHEREAS, the effects of the typhoon likewise caused massive destruction in Cagayan Valley, particularly in the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela, as the region experienced unprecedented flooding in the wake of Typhoon Ulysses;
WHEREAS, the damage was reportedly due to the swelling of the Cagayan River from the amount of rainwater coming in from its eighteen tributaries, with the increase in water level further exacerbated by the outflow of water from the Magat Dam;

WHEREAS, it was reported that at the height of Typhoon Ulysses, seven of Magat Dam’s gates were opened, and the discharge of water from the reservoir caused rapid and widespread flooding in the surrounding areas;

WHEREAS, days after Typhoon Ulysses had exited the Philippine Area of Responsibility, many areas of Cagayan and Isabela remained submerged, with hundreds stranded in their homes and clinging to rooftops with no access to food or water;

WHEREAS, as the death toll continues to rise, and the extent of damage is slowly being revealed, there is an urgent need to examine the actions that were taken during, before, and after the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses;

WHEREAS, given the gravity and unprecedented nature of the situation, the geographic propensity of the country to natural calamities, and the need to prevent similar situations from occurring, there is a need to conduct an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the rapid inflow of water into the reservoir, any non-compliance with laws, rules, or regulations that may have had a contributory effect to the swelling of the Cagayan River, the decision of the National Irrigation Administration to open the spillway gates of the Magat Dam, and if the latter was conducted in accordance with duly established guidelines and protocols;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the appropriate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the severe and unprecedented flooding in the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

Adopted,

LORD ALLAN JAY Q. VELASCO

JOSEPH STEPHEN S. PADUANO

FERDINAND MARTIN G. ROMUALDEZ